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SUBJECT: SYG BAN EXPRESSES FULL SUPPORT FOR AHTISAARI TO
SECURITY COUNCIL

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11. (SBU) At a February 15 lunch with Security Council Permreps, SYG Ban said he fully supported Special Envoy Ahtisaari's status proposal and the "intended way forward." Ban described the situation as being at a crucial crossroads, for which there could be no undue delay or derailment. He said he was urging Belgrade and Pristina to engage constructively with Ahtisaari on a compromise solution.

12. (SBU) South African Ambassador Kumalo said the Kosovo issue would be particularly difficult for Africans and the manner in which the SYG transmitted Ahtisaari's proposal to the Council would be important. South Africa saw three difficult aspects to the issue: the precedent established through a Security Council resolution that splits a sovereign state; adherence to the NAM principles of territorial integrity and sovereignty; and that there should be no reward for Kosovar impatience. Kumalo said the NAM position would take into account the basic principles of territorial integrity and sovereignty.

WOLFF